

A RESOLUTION to honor Sylvester Davis upon forty years of
meritorious service to the Department of
Agriculture and the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those exemplary state employees who have far exceeded the call of duty, and who elevated their professional endeavors to the very epitome of consummate professionalism; and

WHEREAS, for forty outstanding years, Sylvester Davis has proven himself to be a capable and dedicated public servant by means of his astute service as an employee of the Department of Agriculture; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis began his illustrious career with the department as a laboratory technician, and later was a chemist, with the Division of Food, Drugs and Dairies where he was responsible for food, fertilizer and lime analysis; and

WHEREAS, he remained in this position until May 1977, when his expertise and talents were appropriately recognized and he was transferred to the Division of Plant Industries and given the responsibility of establishing an EPA-Certifiable Pesticide Laboratory; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis began this monumental task with one desk, no staff and a small building filled with sand, potting soil and shovels; from these humble beginnings, he supervised the renovation of the building and employed one chemist; and

WHEREAS, under his inspired guidance, this operation has grown into a full section with over twenty employees dedicated to pesticide regulation, pest control applications, pesticide licensing and certification and ground water monitoring of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, Mr. Davis was deservedly promoted to serve as Assistant Director of the Division of Plant Industries, in which important position he assisted in planning and

coordinating the activities of fifty full-time employees, assisted in planning, directing and coordinating programs relative to the enforcement of plant certification, pesticide registration and pesticide regulations, and prepared and monitored federal grants; and

WHEREAS, tremendous growth and changes have taken place in the division since Mr. Davis became Assistant Director; these trends are reflected not only in budget increases and additional staff, but, more vitally, in the increased cooperation and participation from the industries the department regulates; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis' policy has always been to solicit input from regulated industries on regulatory requirements and changes; an example of this great spirit of cooperation with regulated industries was demonstrated in the recent passage of House Bill 2380, which will result in an increase of 1.2 million dollars in new revenues for the division; and

WHEREAS, for the past eight years, Mr. Davis has served with acumen and alacrity as the Director of the Division of Plant Industries, in which position he has adroitly managed four area offices, sixty full-time employees and nineteen seasonal employees; and

WHEREAS, as Director, Mr. Davis has turned in his usual superb performance in planning, directing and coordinating all the regulatory and enforcement activities assigned to the division, and administering several special programs; and

WHEREAS, for the past eight years, Mr. Davis has successfully carried the "Tennessee Torch", protecting our state's agricultural, silvicultural and horticultural industries from insect pest and plant disease; and

WHEREAS, this distinguished professional has also carried the torch for the registration and monitoring of pesticides and uses, and the licensing and certification of pesticide applicators; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis has found the privilege of serving on the Department of Agriculture's management team for nineteen of his forty years with the department to be both challenging and enjoyable, but he has finally decided to heed the tantalizing call of retirement; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis was born and raised in Germantown, Shelby County; he worked for his parents on the family farm until his high school graduation when he moved to Nashville in order to attend Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, he holds a bachelor of science degree in biochemistry/poultry nutrition with an emphasis in plant science and a master of science degree in plant science and organic chemistry from Tennessee State University and he has performed additional studies in infrared spectroscopy and gas chromatography at Fisk University and Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, he has ever been a proficient and devoted servant of his profession, as evidenced by his past leadership as President of the Association of Southern Feed, Fertilizer and Pesticide Control Officials and his membership in numerous other agriculture-related organizations; and

WHEREAS, he has also served his fellow state employees with distinction as a member of the Board of Directors and past State Treasurer of the Tennessee State Employee Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Davis presently serves as President of Phi Beta National Distinguished Service Chapter and he is a past President of the Tennessee State University Alumni Association; and

WHEREAS, his many professional and civic accolades aside, Mr. Davis is fortunate to share love and companionship with his wife, Jo Ann Davis-Davis, his two sons, Anthony and Kenneth; and his brother, our former distinguished colleague, Senator Edward Davis of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, Sylvester Davis has served the citizens of Tennessee with the utmost in dedication and integrity, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor and commend Sylvester Davis upon forty years of meritorious service to the Department of Agriculture and the State of Tennessee; and extend to him our best wishes for every continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.